




What's brown and doesn't float?

*



standuponit

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<https://standuponit.livejournal.com/>

2009-01-11 13:42:00

MOOD: 😊 optimistic

MUSIC: Andrew Bird on All Songs Considered

You'd think that somebody whose totem animal is a semi-aquatic monotreme might not sink like a stone in water, but you'd be wrong. I'm a pretty good swimmer, actually (I know you're surprised) but as soon as I stop moving forward I bob to the bottom. Glub!

On the other paw, though, they fixed the heater in the therapy pool (yay!) and I swam 2000 meters today, and discovered that my shoulders have healed enough that breast stroke is no longer exquisite torture.

Now I'm starving *and* I want to go climb. Doesn't that seem like a contradiction?

*Chazzes!



This looks like a good idea.

...

This.

...

Little guy's not bad.

Gotta teach RHex to smear.

29 comments



 [barsukthom](#)

[January 11 2009, 19:35:27 UTC](#)


[COLLAPSE](#)

Is it any consolation that the afore-mentioned semi-aquatic monotremes spend much of their time at the **BOTTOMS** of streams?

They also are not too well known for their climbing ability.

"Note the rare Alpine Platypus, common to the mountains of Tasmania and Maryland."




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[January 11 2009, 19:40:33 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

A most trenchant observation, my dear Watson!

And Virginia. Though not so much this time of year. Because they are colder than an unheated therapy pool.




 [barsukthom](#)

[January 12 2009, 14:34:12 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Wow! I get to finally be Watson!
(Usually I have to play Inspector Le(bloodystupid)strade.

"How colder than an unheated therapy pool is the heart of ... someone who's very cold-hearted. Coaches. Yeah. They're pretty cold-hearted."



 [hydra_wong](#)

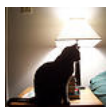
[January 12 2009, 13:10:25 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

They also are not too well known for their climbing ability.

Surely it would be more accurate to say that they have not been *observed* climbing? They could well be shy and furtive boulderers*.

The lack of witnesses means that reports of aquatic monotremes sending up to V15 are rarely taken seriously in the climbing community, alas ...

{*The webbed toes and poison spurs make it hard for them to fasten harnesses, obviously.}



 [txanne](#)

[January 11 2009, 20:18:45 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Being all muscle will do that to a guy. :-)

How is Elmer doing? Is the offer of a scion still open? I think I'm ready to commit to my very own Mr. Collins. (Soft, doughy, and encroaching--the perfect shoggoth.)



 [inaurolillium](#)

[January 11 2009, 21:21:57 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

My adopted grandmother's grandson, despite being able to do everything else required of him, failed his lifeguard test because he couldn't float on his back -- his feet kept sinking.

hugs Poor dears, it's one of the prices of being so thin.

 [eljefe](#)

[January 11 2009, 21:31:31 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I dunno. I am not thin as you know, and I float only as long as I hold a deep breath.


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 [eljefe](#)

[January 11 2009, 21:40:19 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

It's the rocks in my skull.



 [inaurolillium](#)

[January 11 2009, 21:39:29 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Well, dear, you're not fat, either. You clearly have more heavier-than-water tissue than lighter-than-water tissue.

My not-cousin wasn't precisely whipcord-and-bone, he just had no appreciable fat on his legs, so down they went.

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 [inaurolillium](#)

[January 12 2009, 11:55:43 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Pretty much all of me is very well-padded, including my thighs and calves. I have no trouble at all floating. I do have difficulty diving deep, though.

 [eljefe](#)

[January 11 2009, 21:39:35 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

So, it's only occasional torment? *grin* A word of possible caution: be aware that weird things may happen out at the outer ranges of movement. I'll be doing something simple, like carrying a 50lb bag of dog food, and let it get a bit too far back and find that there is suddenly zero strength to hold it in that position. I dunno if it's a nerve thing for me, or muscle damage, but it's very startling when you run into it.

Of course, I also have muscle tissue that was cut so deeply on my forearm that I can do neat party tricks with it, so it's a trade off *grin*



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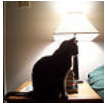
[January 11 2009, 21:56:08 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

The rotator cuffs actually rotate! Both of them! Not exactly the same, but acceptably.

It's like, payoff. *Finally*. Though apparently I can look forward to bursitis in the left one for the rest of my life. There's this thing that feels like somebody prying my shoulderblade up with a butterknife if I forget and lean on my elbow for too long.

I'm still having a hard time doing things like picking stuff up off the floor if I forget and bend from the waist instead of squatting down. But my most hated PT is barbells at arms length, held out to the sides, and rotated.

The worst was when I had to stand there and figure out new ways to turn doorknobs (you think it's a wrist motion, but it's not), but that's also getting better finally.



 [txanne](#)

[January 12 2009, 00:35:05 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

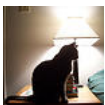
Is that bursitis? Huh. I've had shoulder bursitis for years now, but I thought the shoulderblade thing was something else.



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[January 12 2009, 00:39:00 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Yep. That's the diagnosis.




 [txanne](#)

[January 12 2009, 00:50:34 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I know I should get myself looked at, but finding compatible doctors is _such_ a PITA. Pfui.

I'm glad you're doing so much better!



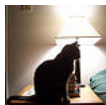
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[January 12 2009, 00:57:07 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Me too! Thank you!

If it's bursitis, they'll probably just tell you things you don't want to hear, like "There's not much we can do for that unless you're desperate enough for cortisone injections."

Which I'm not.



 [txanne](#)

[January 12 2009, 00:59:39 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Nor am I! That's what they said 20 yrs ago when I was diagnosed. If that's still what they're saying, then I can stop worrying about it.

 [rahaeli](#)

[January 12 2009, 09:46:54 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Actually, allow me to pimp the thing that makes my chronic pain tolerable: topical lidocaine patches. They're non-narcotic and non-habituating, so doctors are generally willing to prescribe sufficient quantity of them (*insert DEA rant here*), and they just stop

whatever's hurting from hurting. The brand name is Lidoderm. They're expensive if your insurance won't cover them, and they're off-label for chronic pain (they are FDA-approved for, of all things, treatment of *shingles*), but they are miracles of pain relief.

If you're in a situation where you're using the pain as a warning sign to stop you from doing further damage to your joints, you obviously shouldn't get rid of the pain entirely, but our bodies are *broken* when it comes to registering pain sometimes, and thanks, body, I don't need to know that my hip joint is screwed up, since there's nothing I can do about it.

(The only problem is that sometimes it's hard to get them to stay on your skin. For a shoulder, you might need someone to tape them down for you.)



[edschweppe](#)

[January 12 2009, 00:24:32 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

2000 meters? As in two kilometers? As in a mile and a quarter?
As in five hundred meters more than the swimming leg of an Olympic triathlon?
Yeah, I can see you feeling a might hungry after that sort of a workout.

As for not floating - I'm guessing the therapy pool is freshwater? Bet you'd float in seawater. (As a former submariner, I'm intimately familiar with the effects of salinity on buoyancy.)

Obviously, you need to spend more time on tropical beaches to conduct the appropriate research. In the name of science, of course.



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[January 12 2009, 00:37:58 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

As in forty laps of the twenty-five meter pool, at fifty meters a lap there-and-back-again. Took about an hour.

I wanted to see if I could swim a mile, and then, well, you know how one gets about round numbers.

I bet I would float in seawater. I approve of your research plan. Where do I apply for the grant?



[edschweppe](#)

[January 12 2009, 01:06:54 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

I bet I would float in seawater. I approve of your research plan. Where do I apply for the grant?

Hey, you're the Federal employee around here; you're in a much better position to research those things than I am.

Besides, don't you have friends on Maui? Out towards Hana? Or am I confusing you with someone else?




[standuponit](#)

[January 12 2009, 01:11:48 UTC](#)


[COLLAPSE](#)

Family of a friend. Not sure I can just show up on their doorstep...

 [edschweppe](#)

[January 12 2009, 01:55:55 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Oops. My mistake - and yep, if you don't know for a fact that you could just show up unannounced and all on your ownsome, then you probably shouldn't.

 [sprrwhwk](#)

[January 12 2009, 04:37:59 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

as soon as I stop moving forward I bob to the bottom.

Mmm, I resemble that remark. Didn't used to, but then I discovered that I actually enjoyed exercise, as long as it got me from point A to point B and only involved competing against myself and the physical world. Oops. Then again, I don't actually enjoy swimming much, because the only thing I hate more than being cold is being wet and cold, and most heated pools are still too cold for me. You sound like you're more exothermic than I am. :-) Give me a nice long hike or bike ride any day -- air has a lot friendlier specific heat than water.

Glad to hear you're healing! That's a feeling of accomplishment that's hard to beat. (Need to finally get on the exercises for my ankle, dammit -- there's a trail in California I need to finish.)



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[January 12 2009, 04:42:16 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

I think you mean endothermic. And no, probably not.

But therapy pools are around 80-90 degrees. This time of year, it's about the only time I *am* warm.



 [kayjayoh](#)

[January 12 2009, 04:55:37 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Oh god, I <3 the therapt pool at my gym. Only...getting out is such a trial at this time of year. Especially since I have hair that is waist length and rather thick, so there is no way it is going to be even close the dry by the time I have to step out into the Wisconsin air. I usually tuck it up in my hat and work a scarf turban around it.

 [sprrwhwk](#)


[January 12 2009, 05:17:55 UTC](#) [COLLAPSE](#)

Exothermic -- heat-producing. At least that was my guess. Given the number of calories you seem to go through, all that energy's gotta go *somewhere*, though it may go largely towards getting you up rock walls and such. Platypuses are mammals, so you'd darn well better be exothermic -- warm-bloodedness is one of us mammal's primary defining characteristics, after all -- unless you're secretly a reptile in disguise, which would just be creepy. (Then again, insulation may have more to do with perceived temperature than metabolic rate does, and I make a tar-paper shack look positively cozy... If I didn't have to be up stupid-early for work tomorrow, I'd do a little research online, 'cuz I'm curious now.)

80-90 degrees? Oh. Oh my. That sounds *heavenly*. Where do I sign up?

A six-cups-of-decaf-coffee-a-day habit and sweaters are about the only way I can stay warm at work, and I need a thick wool quilt on my bed to keep me warm at night. I'm slowly becoming accustomed to dealing with cold indoors again, after living four years in an overheated dorm. I'd rather be cold in the winter than hot, any day -- the cognitive dissonance is just too much otherwise -- but I still haven't figured out how to be particularly comfortable with it yet.



 [standupont](#)

[January 12 2009, 05:32:18 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Warm-blooded animals are endothermic, homeothermic, and/or tachymetabolic. (Platypuses are all three.)

Cold-blooded animals are ectothermic, poikilothermic, and/or bradymetabolic.

Actually, body temperaturewise, I run a degree or two cooler than normal. I have a metabolic disorder that means I have to consume between two to three times more calories than a healthy person. It's not that unusual: people with cystic fibrosis, for example, also have a seriously tweaked metabolic demand.

Coffee, counterintuitive though it is, is likely to make you *colder*. Caffeine is a vasoconstrictor, which is why it's effective on some kinds of headaches. (That's also one reason why it can raise your blood pressure.) But since it impedes your blood flow, it makes you feel colder.

Switch to decaf. =8=>



 [calanthe_b](#)

[January 12 2009, 06:01:24 UTC](#)

[COLLAPSE](#)

Heh. Moving or not moving makes no difference to me--I float about as well as a stone boat, unless I'm on my back in completely calm water and, ridiculously, *wearing my glasses*. Actual swimming = major panic attack time, even backstroke.

Now I'm starving and I want to go climb. Doesn't that seem like a contradiction?

No. If I had just been swimming I'd be wanting to get as far away from the water as possible too! :)

Glad to hear the shoulders are doing better!

This looks like a
good idea.

...

This.

...

Little guy's not
bad.

Gotta teach RHex
to smear.

